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TORONTO

INTERLUDES

(FIFTH SERIES)

BEING

THREE ESSAYS AND SOME VERSES

BY

HORACE SMITH

"The little of myself that pleases myself I could wish to be accounted worth pleasing others. I should like to survive so, were it only for the sake of those who love me in private, knowing as I do what a treasure is the possession of a friend's mind when *he* is no more."

LEIGH HUNT, *My Books*

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PREFACE.

IF my readers can find as much pleasure in reading what I have written, as I have found in the writing thereof, they will be happy enough. If they should be disappointed I am truly sorry; but can scarcely attribute my want of success to old age after what I have here written upon that subject.

I am not without hope that my kind critics may discover that this fifth series is in no way inferior to those which have preceded it.

IVY BANK,
November, 1910.

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ESSAYS.

OLD MEN AND BOYS.

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF OLD AGE AND YOUTH.

“THE old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue.¹ The old man deifies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candour; but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth; and youth with contempt upon the scrupulosity of age.” So speaks the pedantic Princess in *Rasselas*, not without some insight into human nature; but all young men are not rash, and all old men are not prudent.

“The errors of young men,” writes Lord Bacon, “are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men

¹ Meaning, I suppose, *virtus* or *valour*.

amount but to this, that more might have been done or sooner. . . . Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period; but content themselves with a mediocrity of success."

"When I was young?—Ah, woeful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
.
Nought cared this body for wind or weather,
When Youth and I lived in't together.
Ere I was old? Ah, woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here.
.
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are housemates still."

But one has need to become a Christian Scientist before one can entirely forget "old age," when it has arrived in fact; and I doubt if even the charm of the poet can delude us into believing that Youth is ever-present.

We do well to remember that Youth has its troubles as well as Age. In one of his letters the poet Cowper writes: "There are few perhaps in this world who have not cause to look back with regret on the days of infancy; yet, to say truth, I suspect some deception in this. For infancy itself has its cares; and though we cannot now conceive how trifles could affect us so much, it is certain that they did. Trifles they appear now, but such they were not then." Whatever the trials of children may be, they have generally a marvellous power of rallying; and smiles follow tears in happy succession. But, upon the other hand, the older people have the advantage of "years that bring the philosophic mind,"

and though their troubles may be heavier than those of childhood, yet they have (or ought to have) strength to bear them manfully.

If it be true, as Juliet says, that “old folks” are

“Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead,”

or, as Hamlet’s book said, that “old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams,” theirs is no doubt a somewhat sad case; but they may have their compensations nevertheless.

“Last scene of all . . .

Is second childishness and mere oblivion;

Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.”

Such a state is truly sad, and we can only hope for all that arrive at it a speedy delivery to another and a better world. It is a living death. Let us draw the curtain on this scene, and remember that we have been told by another poet

“Old age hath yet his honour and his toil,”

and it is wiser to dwell upon this aspect of the case.

I suppose there are very few men past the middle age who like to be told that they look older than they really are; and it is perhaps still more annoying to be actually taken for somebody else considerably older than oneself.

One day, as I was leaving Victoria Station, I heard a loud call behind me. “Lord Asterisk! Lord Asterisk!” I turned and saw a gentleman approaching, who said, “Oh, I beg your pardon, I took you for the Earl of Asterisk.” “Don’t mention it,” I exclaimed; “I am

much flattered." I pursued my way, elated at being taken for an earl, and had the curiosity to "look him up" in *Debrett*. Alas, he was eighty-two! On the other hand, I much doubt if it is in a man's favour to be what is called a "well-preserved man." An active and useful life *must* mark the outward appearance with some scars or wrinkles.

Old men resent being told that their hair is growing thin on the top. "A fine head of 'air, sir," said a coiffeur, "for a gentleman at your time of life, sir." No response. "Very odd, sir, but I never knew a clever man have much 'air, sir." Still no answer. "It's very odd indeed, sir, but I have *never* met with an *idiot* who was quite bald, sir!" How to compliment an old gentleman's tendency to have his hair thin on the top seems to be beset with difficulty. A little girl of four or five years of age was sitting on the knee of the present writer when she exclaimed: "Why do you wear all your hair upon your chin. I wear nine on the top of my head," shaking a mass of lovely golden locks in my face.

On another occasion I was travelling by train, and a lady and her little child about four years old sat opposite to me. The child was very pretty, and I observed that she was staring at me intently with wide-open blue eyes. At length she pointed at me with her little forefinger and exclaimed, "Mother, *what's* that?" The poor mother was horror-stricken!

It is also true, upon the other hand, that young men do not like to be told that they are young. A young man felt much irritated when a lady congratulated him upon his becoming a member of the *Juvenile Carlton Club*.

The poet suggests that we may “learn from the wisdom of age” or be “cheered by the sallies of youth”; but that expectation is often disappointed, and we find old men who are anything but wise, and young men who are persistently dull. I suppose that generally old men are not so bumptious as young men are apt to be; but this is far from being an universal rule, for sometimes old men, who have lived in an atmosphere of flattery and adulation, become intolerably conceited and domineering; and some young men, who have been too severely snubbed, have become hopelessly shy and nervous.

A young lady at a dance exclaimed to her partner: “Oh, Mr. Jones, how delightful it must be to be so wise and to know *everything*.” “It is,” he replied. On another occasion, at a breakfast party at Camford, a “third-year” man, waving his hand towards his book-cases, said: “Yes, I think I may say that I have mastered the contents of all those volumes.” “Dear me, Brown,” said a freshman, “what a *mind* you must have got!” On the whole, I come to the conclusion that conceit is bad in old or young, and is sometimes to be found in both.

Yonder old man thinks that yonder youth is foolish. The old man says, “what you say or do is what I said or did when I was your age.” And yonder youth says to the old man, “when I come to your time of life I hope I shall not say or do as you say or do.” But as a matter of fact he will; nay, he may say or do worse for all he can tell. He must remember what was said by an old “don” at a fellows’ meeting that “we are none of us infallible,—not even the youngest.” The old man, on the

other hand, may remember with R. L. Stevenson that "it is as natural and as right for a young man to be imprudent and exaggerated, to live in swoops and circles, and beat about his cage like any other wild thing newly captured, as it is for old men to turn grey, or mothers to love their offspring, or heroes to die for something worthier than their lives." It is difficult, no doubt, for young men seriously to anticipate that they must one day be old ; but it should be easy enough for old men to remember that they once were young.

King Rehoboam asked the advice of the old councillors of his father, and, of course, did not take it ; but sent for the young men who, he knew, would give bad advice, which he was quite prepared to follow. "Let him expect disaster who shapes his course on a young man's counsel," said Leonardo da Vinci ; but I think that older men may reasonably consider the suggestions of the young, although it might be worse than useless to argue with them. To the young and headstrong there is nothing so provoking as to be checked by the caution of old men. The river which rushes down a narrow channel frets and foams over the sunken rocks and shoals, and seems to resent their interference with its onward course. It seems to be trying to stop itself, or even to curl and curve back.

Cicero says : "As petulance and lust belong to the young more than to the old, yet not to all young men, but to those who are not virtuous ; so that senile folly, which is called dotage, belongs to weak old men, and not to all. . . . I like a young man in whom there is something of the old, so I like an old man in whom there is something of the young." I suppose Cicero means

that, like Wordsworth, he admires the old man who bears

“A young lamb’s heart amid the full grown flocks.”

Cicero also says through the mouth of Cato, supposed to be eighty-four years of age, “Old men of regulated minds, and neither testy nor ill-natured pass a very tolerable old age; but a discontented and ill-natured disposition is irksome in every age.”

I will not counsel young men to become old. They will do so only too rapidly. As Meg Dodds says, “folk maun grow old or die.” Nor will I counsel the old men to become young. They cannot do so, however much they may affect it. A young man pretending to be old, or an old man affecting to be young offers only a ridiculous spectacle. As Ulysses says: “That which we are, we are”; and we had better be content with that undoubted truism.

“If,” says the *Rambler*, “dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them, if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gaiety with faltering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and that if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.” It is a melancholy spectacle to behold old fools tottering after the gambols of young ones, and to see young fools aping the gravity of old ones.

It has been a matter for cynical comment that old men incline towards morality and religion, and that the young propose to themselves to follow their example some

day, although in the meantime they indulge in worldly pleasures and follies—

“How many a father have I seen
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and green.”

Swift said: “When a man becomes virtuous in old age he is but making a sacrifice to God of the devil’s leavings”; and the wise man has warned us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth. But the young and happy are prone to forget, and yet they must one day remember.

“And almost everyone when *age*,
Disease and sorrow strike him,
Inclines to think there is a God
Or something very like Him!”

The young are quickly satisfied by a partial investigation of views or facts; but the old man has had more time to consider and to reconsider, and “yet consider it again”; and this has led him to discover an order and sequence of things, and a probable First Cause. “It is true,” says Lord Bacon, “that a little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to Atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to Religion; for, while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them, confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity.”

It is certain that in many men and women the older they get the more stiffened their characters become, and they are less and less able to adapt themselves to altered

circumstances. "You speak like a boy," returned MacGregor in a low tone that growled like thunder, "like a boy who thinks the old gnarled oak can be twisted as easily as the young sapling. Can I forget that I have been branded as an outlaw, stigmatised as a traitor, etc., etc.?"

In old age we escape being plagued by our many and perhaps conflicting passions, and such as may be left are not so violent as they were in our youth. Yet we must not expect that our vices or imperfections will entirely leave us. "The wiser mind," as Wordsworth says,

"Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind."

In the drama of *Joseph and his Brethren*, by Charles Wells, Reuben remarks :

"And trust me, sirs, our imperfections
Will follow age, nor die before the man."

In old age also our bodily ailments are not of so much importance relatively ; because in any event we have not to bear them much longer. The thief upon the gallows asked for a pot of beer, and when it was brought to him, he blew off the froth, because (he said) he had heard that it was unwholesome ; but the balance of his mind had probably been affected by the imminent suspension of his body. It was noted by some rather profane person that Dr. Cumming, whilst he was engaged in announcing that the world would come to an end in the course of a year or two, had nevertheless just taken a ninety-nine years' lease of a house to live in. Both the thief and Dr. Cumming were not really reasoning clearly and consistently. Under the circumstances the froth on the

beer or the length of the lease was immaterial to the issue.

One well-known characteristic of old age is forgetfulness. Old men and women are often laughed at by the young and frivolous for mere forgetfulness, arising generally from preoccupation of mind. Thus an aged father of a family will set the whole household looking for his spectacles, which after much fuss are found upon his forehead. Sometimes an old gentleman may come into a church or a court of justice and forget to remove his hat. Old Lord Chancellor Brougham used to sit in the front row of the Benchers' seats in the Temple Church, and in a loud voice during the sermon could be heard saying, "How does he know that? Where did he get that from? That's more than he knows, etc., etc." No doubt he was forgetting that he was in a church. There is a story told of Carlyle (the accuracy of which I have not been able to verify) that one evening his nieces asked him to read a portion of Scripture at family prayers. He opened the Book at one of the chapters of Job, and read on and on, chapter after chapter, without pausing. At length a niece approached him and said, "Thank you, we always finish with a prayer." "Finish it your own way," said the sage; and left the room abruptly. Two young men were walking with an old gentleman, when one of the young ones said "good-bye," and when he had gone out of earshot the old gentleman said, "Ah! a pleasant enough fellow to talk to, Jones is; but between you and me he is a liar and a hypocrite." Unfortunately it was not Jones who had gone away! A certain aged nobleman went to dine at a friend's house, and towards

the end of the repast he turned to his *host* and said, “I am so sorry to have given you such a bad dinner, but the fact is my cook has just left, and I am dependent upon my kitchen maid.” A similar mistake was made by an old gentleman who asked his new nurse, who had just taken up her duties, to read a post-letter from his wife. She read: “Dear Arthur, I am sorry that I have sent you such an ugly nurse.” (Tableau!).

“Old age is the harvest of what a man is ; the reaping of what he has become during the period when life was manifesting itself in action. As he ceases from his labours his works follow him.”—*The Harvest Within*, by A. T. Mahan, D.C.L., author of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*.

The beauty of youth is universally acknowledged. Is there anything in nature more lovely than a beautiful child, or a beautiful young woman? Manhood, too, has often so fine and noble an aspect as to merit an award of beauty. And I would wish to point out that even old age is evidently shown to be attractive by the attention which the greatest artists have bestowed on it. The old men and women of Rembrandt, Vandyke, Titian, Watts, Israels, Herkomer, and many others, show that something beautiful can be made of old age; and I think we can most of us remember some sweet and saintly face which we have often gazed at in wonder and admiration, and felt with the poet

“ The setting sun, and music at the close,
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last.”

It is, I think, the fine moral nature shining through the physical barrier which gives the charm to the picture—

the purified and sweetened soul triumphing at last over the flesh.

As Thackeray wrote in his genial manner :

“ And though, good friend, with whom I dine,
Your honest head is grey ;
And, like this grizzled head of mine,
Has seen its last of May ;
Yet, with a heart that’s ever kind,
A gentle spirit gay,
You’ve spring perennial in your mind
And round you make a May.”

Also I cannot help thinking that the dear old Colonel in *The Newcomes* was as beautiful and loveable when he was saying “Adsum” as he was when he and Clive strolled into the “Cave of Harmony.”

Has there been in the history of mankind anything more noble or more pathetic than the last days of Sir Walter Scott?—the great genius striving with all his might against old age and infirmity in the hope that he might by his labour pay off all his creditors to the full, and that cheerfully and without any murmur. He writes in his diary : “ Looking back to the conclusion of 1826, I observe that the last year ended in trouble and sickness, with pressure for the present and gloomy prospects for the future. The sense of a great privation so lately sustained, together with the very doubtful and clouded nature of my private affairs, pressed hard upon my mind. I am now restored in constitution, and though I am still on troubled waters, yet I am rowing with the tide, and less than the continuation of my exertions of 1827 may, with God’s blessing, carry me successfully through 1828, when we may gain a more open sea, if not exactly a safe

port. Above all, my children are well. For all these great blessings it becomes me well to be thankful to God, who, in his good time and pleasure, sends us good as well as evil." Such words are beyond all comment !

J. R. Green, the historian, was not an old man, though he was beginning to feel what old age must be like when he wrote in a letter in 1869 :

"What seems to grow fairer to me as life goes by is the love and peace and tenderness of it, not its wit and cleverness and grandeur of knowledge, but just the laughter of little children and the friendship of friends, and the cosy talk by the fireside, and the sight of flowers and the sound of music."

R. L. Stevenson reminds us in his very best manner : "After the sun is down and the west faded, the heavens begin to fill with shining stars. So, as we grow old, a sort of equable jog trot of feeling is substituted for the ups and downs of passion and disgust ; the same influence that restrains our hopes, quiets our apprehensions ; if the pleasures are less intense, the troubles are milder and more tolerable ; and, in a word, this period for which we are asked to hoard up everything as in a time of famine, is, in its own right, the richest, easiest and happiest of life."

II. UPON GROWING OLD.

THERE are two ways of growing old—(1) physically, and (2) mentally and morally. That we should grow *physically* old as we approach our final decay (if we live long enough) is inevitable. We need not anticipate such decay, but await it patiently, and accept it with content. Yet it is unwise to neglect all health-giving pleasures or exercises, because such neglect not only hastens the bodily decay, but in doing so it affects the mental and moral part of our nature. The same certainty of deterioration in our *mental and moral* faculties does not obtain. Dr. Johnson said: “It is a man’s own fault—it is from want of use if his mind grows torpid in old age.” Hobbes also remarked that “the dotage seen often in old age is not the effect of time, but sometimes of the excesses of youth, and of not furnishing their minds in their youth, so that they have been children always from beginning of life to the end of it.”

It has been a first childhood all along. Certainly, I think, experience leads us to believe that the more the intellect is used the longer and brighter is its life, so that even in the case of very old men, the brain will retain its health and vigour when the limbs have become enfeebled.

Leonardo da Vinci gave sage counsel to the young when he wrote: "In youth acquire that which may requite you for the deprivations of old age; and if you are mindful that old age has wisdom for its food, you will so exert yourself in youth that your old age will not lack sustenance."

Men who have led a strenuous or exciting life, and have had neither time nor inclination for quiet thoughts or pursuits, have generally been complaining and unhappy in their old age. "To-day, December 20, 1871," writes Garibaldi, "bending with stiffened limbs over the fire, I recall with emotion those scenes of the past, when life seemed to smile on me in the presence of the most magnificent spectacle I ever beheld (the Pampas in S. America). I, for my part, am old and worn. Where are those splendid horses? Where are the bulls, the antelopes, the ostriches, which beautified and enlivened those pleasant hills?"—and so, in his old age, Garibaldi "sat brooding, restless, and discontented."

Some old persons derive pleasure from a retrospect of their lives, and if their lives have been well spent, they may without pride but with gratitude, employ their thoughts in agreeable remembrances. But I rather doubt the value of prospects.

. . . "This is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things."

Certainly, if the life has been an empty one, there will be little pleasure in remembrances of it.

"Pray, my dear child, don't compliment me any more upon my learning," wrote Horace Walpole; "there is nobody so superficial. Except a little history, a little

poetry, a little painting, and some divinity, I know nothing. How should I? I, who have always lived in the big world; who lie abed all the morning, calling it morning as long as you please; who sup in company; who have played at Pharaoh half my life, and now at Loo till two or three in the morning; who have always loved pleasure; haunted auctions—in short, who don't know so much astronomy as would carry me to Knightsbridge, nor more physic than a physician, nor, in short, anything that is called science. If it were not that I lay up a little provision in Summer, like the ant, I should be as ignorant as all the people I live with. How I have laughed when some of the Magazines have called me *the learned gentleman!* Pray don't be like the Magazines." In the above passage I dare say Horace Walpole gives a fairly accurate description of his life, but one cannot believe that the retrospect could afford much solace to his old age.

A young farmer was urged to plant some apple trees. He refused, saying that they were too long in growing. His father was asked if he would plant the trees; but the father also said they were slow growers and life was short. Finally, the grandfather was approached, and he at once planted the trees, and lived long enough to drink the cider made from the apples grown thereon. He, at least, had not let old age interfere with his usefulness.

Swift one day pointed to a tree which was decayed and withered in its upper branches, and exclaimed: "I shall be like that tree; I shall die at the top." He did so, and a sad and pitiable spectacle he became towards the close of his life. It is not for his fellow mortals to judge him, but that he was torn to pieces by his own

thoughts, his ambitions, his desires, his wilfulness, and his unbridled scorn is obvious to all who read his writings or his *Life*. The steady and regular exercise of the brain or of the body is healthy, but an extravagant and unruly excitement is harmful ; the inordinate struggle for riches, place, or power, will leave its mark upon mind and body.

One's attention has been called frequently of late years to the difficulty of finding physical employment for men over forty years of age, and it is even suggested that a man's mental qualities become impaired after the age of fifty—or that, at all events, the nerve or will-power has deteriorated. Hasty generalisations of this sort are apt to be misleading. The exceptions to the rule (if it be one) are often found to be so numerous as to make it of little value. When Mr. Justice Field had become deaf and practically unfit to perform his judicial duties, although his mind was as vigorous as ever, one of his brother judges advised him seriously to retire. "Well," said Field, "I may be no longer fit to be a judge, but *you* never were fit." At the age of eighty-seven John Wesley began to feel that he could not preach more than two sermons in the day, and he was forced to give up his habit of preaching a sermon every day at five o'clock in the morning. He complained that he could not read small print except in a strong light. In April, 1908, a nonconformist minister at the age of 101 preached a sermon of thirty-four minutes' duration in a full and sonorous voice, and was congratulated by His Most Gracious Majesty upon his longevity. Whether his congregation thought the sermon lasted too long, I never heard. Verdi wrote his best opera (perhaps) after he

was seventy, and Titian at ninety-nine said that he was only just beginning to know how to paint! Sir Isaac Newton, the Duke of Wellington, Dr. Johnson, Wordsworth, Tennyson, are strong instances of men whose vigour of mind remained unimpaired to a great age. Count Moltke was seventy years of age when he conducted the Franco-German War; and at the age of seventy Gladstone's brain had so greatly expanded that he had to have his hat enlarged, so that it would seem

“Peace hath her victories no less renown'd than War.”

Upon the whole there seems to be no reason why we should grow prematurely old. However anxious we may be to have a long life, I suppose none of us would desire to live on when all that makes life enjoyable and worthy has departed from us. An immortality of decrepitude can hardly be desired. The “Struldbriggs” who dwelt in Luggnagg were, according to Gulliver, immortal, but they became old like other folk, and had a bad time of it. They had “a perpetual life under all the usual disadvantages which old age brings along with it. . . . The least miserable among them appear to be those who turn to dotage, and certainly lose their memories. These meet with more pity and assistance because they want many bad qualities which abound in others. . . . At ninety they lose their teeth and hair. . . . They eat and drink whatever they can get without relish and appetite. The diseases they were subject to still continue without increasing or diminishing. . . . They never can amuse themselves with reading, because their memory will not serve to carry them from the beginning of a sentence to

the end, and by this defect they are deprived of the only entertainment whereof they might otherwise be capable!" Certainly this kind of longevity seems undesirable.

One great failing in old age is the tendency to become a bore, but surely it is not a necessary evil, and we may grow old without it. It arises, I think, from some feeling of jealousy. We are afraid we are being neglected. We insist upon being attended to, to be waited upon, to be listened to; and we have lost much of our sympathy for others and think only of ourselves. After a father had been lecturing his son upon his conduct at an immoderate length, the son at last lost all patience. "All you have said, father, may be very right; but I must warn you that if you talk like that you will get yourself very much disliked." The Scythians, according to Sydney Smith, as soon as their parents began to get old and tell long stories resorted to the severe measure of killing and eating them—but I imagine nothing could be more tough and indigestible than an old bore. Neither is it necessary to be crabbed and ill-natured as one grows older. On the contrary, a really good man will become more tolerant. Dr. Johnson, when he was more than seventy-two years old, said, "As I know more of mankind I expect less of them, and am ready now to call a man *a good man* upon easier terms than I was formerly." A long experience of the difficulties and dangers of life, both physical and moral, leads us to modify our youthful judgments of the conduct of others. It is so easy when we are young to believe that there are no difficulties or dangers, either for ourselves or for others; but it is borne in upon us as we

grow old that no man is safe ; and as a result we only feel sorrow and not anger when a man fails. Having lost the sense of impatience and irritation with which we were accustomed to regard the failings of our fellows, we are more able to see their good qualities and to give credit for them. Toleration is or ought to be a characteristic of old age—but the toleration should be of the sinner, and not of the sin. I think it was Goethe who said that he grew more tolerant of faults as he grew older because he found he had them all himself at some time or other ; but that seems to me to be entirely the wrong view to take. A man should bewail his own faults even more when he sees them in others as well as in himself. He ought to look with lenient eye upon the wrong-doer, but not excuse *himself* on the ground that *errare est humanum*, for it is certain that two blacks will not make a white.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table writes : “ If the time comes when you must lay down the fiddle and the bow, because your fingers are too stiff, and drop the ten-foot sculls, because your arms are too weak, and, after dallying awhile with the eye-glasses, come at last to the undisguised reality of spectacles—if the time comes when that fire of life we spoke of has burned so low that, where its flames reverberated, there is only the sombre stain of regret, and where its coals glowed, only the white ashes that cover the embers of memory, don’t let your heart grow cold, and you may carry cheerfulness and love with you into the teens of your second century, if you can last so long.” And I would add you may be useful and valuable, even when you arrive at twice forty years.

It is to be in a sad plight, if when a man is old he can only say with Macbeth :

“ I have lived long enough : my way of life
Is fall’n into the sear and yellow leaf—
And that which should accompany old age
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have.”

It is a sad thing for a man to fall under the curse of Prospero :

“ And as, with age, his body uglier grows
So his mind cankers.”

But if we have kept ourselves bright and clear in our youth and manhood—if we have not marred and blurred our faculties by indulging in evil passions and depraved tastes, we may continue bright and clear in our old age, which may be “as a lusty winter, frosty but kindly”; and we need not fear the bogey of “senile decay.”

“ Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh
A melancholy slave ;
But an old age serene and bright
And lovely as a Lapland night
Shall lead thee to thy grave.”

And lastly we come to the spiritual part of us—to the individual soul. Does it, too, fall into its second childhood, and so fade away for ever? Surely if it has retained anything of the love and purity which should be in it and with which it was endowed when “trailing clouds of glory” it came into the world, it will towards the end of life be freed from much that has interfered with and obscured its perfect brightness. There must

still remain things from which the soul cannot get free and yet there may be enough of light and love "left behind" to enable it to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven as a little child either here or hereafter. However that may be, there are those who have passed through a long life of many disappointments and sorrows, as well as many joys and consolations ; and through it all have learnt in their old age to be heartily and unfeignedly thankful :

" And so the shadows fall apart
And so the west winds play :
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day."

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

I WAS born on November the 18th, 1836, at 28 Tavistock Square, London. Our nursery window looked over the fields to Hampstead, but very soon the London and North Western Railway, and its various accessories obscured the view. I think the neighbourhood was pleasant at that time, and was fairly fashionable, for I remember Mr. Baron Platt lived close by, and we children regarded him with great awe, and wondered why he did not walk about in a full-bottomed wig. From Tavistock Square the family removed to a large house and grounds at Stamford Hill, greatly to the delight of all. I remember the wild joy with which I first saw the avenue of chestnuts leading up to the front entrance, the stables, the back lawn with fine evergreen oak in the centre, and the many flower beds. At the back of the house a long narrow path surrounding two small paddocks led on one side through the kitchen garden and fruit trees; and on the other side through a wild belt of overcrowded trees beneath which grew periwinkles and primroses. At the far end was the fish pond where I used to seat myself for hours upon a recumbent willow stump, and catch quantities of roach, to the horror of our cook, who declared they were quite unfit for food.

My father kept a carriage, and horse for driving, but I do not think he kept a horse for riding until a later period. We had a pony to ride, whose great delight was to kick us off his back in the paddock, and then rush wildly to the stables. I have never since liked riding.

From Stamford Hill, then (but not now) in the wild of the country, the family migrated to Porchester Terrace, where we had only a small garden which did not afford us much gratification, though my eldest brother grew very fair strawberries there. Here on Sunday we used to go to the Lock Chapel where the Rev. Capel Molyneux was the popular minister. He was a man of undoubted natural eloquence, and a really fine delivery, but his doctrine was after the strictest sect of the Calvinists. His preaching I think affected me very strongly at first, but I happily became emancipated at a later date. From Porchester Terrace we moved to 6 Westbourne Terrace, a large corner house with absolutely no back door whatever. Here my father died: and my mother and my two sisters and I moved to Sussex Gardens, where I remained until 1870, when I married.

Whilst we were at Porchester Terrace my youngest brother Ernest, four years of age, died of scarlet fever. I have his portrait by Baxter, and it is evident that he must have been a very beautiful child. Whilst we were in Westbourne Terrace, my brother Arthur, who was an officer in the East India Company's Service, died at Allahabad. I think my father never recovered from the shock of his loss. He had every reason to be proud of him. My father was a wholesale tea dealer in Laurence Poultney Lane in the city. On one or two rare occasions he took me to the warehouse, and I saw with wonder the

huge tea chests, and the way in which the carman dealt with them ; as well as the solemnity with which my father and my eldest brother, who was in the business, tasted decoctions of tea out of little white tea-cups with an inhaling succulent sound, which I had always been taught was bad manners. My mother was a daughter of John Boden of Ednaston, Derbyshire, and my father's family also came from that county, so that I ought to be and probably am

“ Derbyshire born and Derbyshire bred,
Strong in the arm and thick in the head,”

as the old rhyme has it.

My father retired from the tea business, and with his two sons joined the business of Boden and Co., lace manufacturers of Derby, and died worth about £60,000, this had to be divided amongst three sons and two daughters. My two brothers became wealthy men, and all of us had a sufficiency. My father's death occurred just after I had left the University and before I was called to the Bar. I felt his loss most severely. He did not take much notice of us when we were children, but in the last few years of his life he and I became great friends, and in his last illness he took great pains to have me constantly near him. My *Song of the Sea*, which is autobiographical, was a great favourite of my mother's.

I must now turn more closely to my own self and my own doings.

I was sent to a dame's school at Woodford, kept by three ladies who, I believe, were kind-hearted people, but they would not allow the boys to go near any fire in winter, and the playroom had no fireplace at all. I was simply frozen to such an extent that the doctor feared I

should lose my toes (like the Pobble). The school caught fire one day (probably as a judgment); and one boy was going to jump out of an open window when I caught him by the leg. We all went off to a house at some distance, and danced and played games. That night I slept in one of the rooms which had been charred by the flames and smelt horribly. I was in great terror, but slept at last. At this school I learnt to cut out animals in paper, an art which has often amused my children when they were small, and my grand-children later. From this school I went to another at Redlands, near Clifton, where the master was a Wesleyan, an able man, but peculiar in his ways of teaching. He taught Greek before Latin, and both of them in a sort of conversational fashion. His instructions in Euclid and Algebra were excellent. He made one understand. The result was that when I went to Highgate Grammar School, I found that I could translate Greek more freely than the first form, and certainly could do better in Euclid or Algebra; but I knew nothing at all about Latin grammar, or how to add or subtract ordinary figures, and the multiplication table was as hateful to me as it was to Marjorie Fleming. At the school at Redlands we constantly had boiled beef and very heavy suet pudding for dinner, and there is no doubt that the food was very indifferent, and the doctors whom my parents consulted thought that the illness from which I suffered was due to this cause. Certain it is that I became ill just before I went to Highgate Grammar School, and continued ill during the time I was there. I do not think I stayed a whole year. Although my house-master and the head-master, Dr. Dyne, were very kind and indulgent to me in every way, yet I was very miserable.

I could neither play, nor learn. The doctors said I suffered from liver complaint, and dosed me with endless blue pill. My own belief is that my complaint was mental, and that the disorder was nervous. I will endeavour to explain why I believe this to be the case, though I am aware how dangerous it is to try to render a true account of one's own thoughts and feelings, especially as to the long past.

As a child I was ugly, and I became very early aware of the fact. My sister, Isabel, was a very beautiful child. I remember that a nurse, talking to our nurse in Tavistock Square, compared us to "Beauty and the Beast." I felt it very keenly. An uncle of mine was standing on the hearthrug at home, and, with great deliberation, taking a pinch of snuff. "Well," he said, regarding me steadfastly, "you are the ugliest little beggar I ever saw." Worse than this happened; for I remember a lady friend saying to my mother in my presence that "it was quite a shame to call me ugly, and that I had a rich complexion, and was like Murillo's Laughing Boy." I knew the picture well, and did not think it any compliment. Now the reason of all this anxiety about my personal appearance was because I was born with a club foot. A marvellously skilful operation had been performed when I was quite small by a distinguished surgeon named Babbington—a cousin, I believe, of Lord Macaulay; but still the deformity was perceptible, and I regret to say that boys used sometimes to taunt me with my defect. I hope and believe that boys are braver and better behaved now-a-days. I was firmly convinced that I was deformed, ugly, and generally despised.

I was taken by my father to see the play of *Richard*

the Third. He always declared that seeing that play had upset my liver. Probably that was the last straw which broke the camel's back. I was alarmingly excited by the play, and was said to be delirious. On the occasion of a cricket match (Stamford Hill against All England), I was only an onlooker ; but my three brothers were playing. I well remember my second brother, William, jumping some iron railings to save a sixer. That night I was delirious ; and I suffered for a long time from a dread of something approaching me in the nature of a railway train,—that being the particular horror I experienced when delirious. I was subject to very violent headaches, and used, when alone, to stamp about and talk wildly, complaining of all sorts of things to myself. I used to write a great quantity of poetry. When I was about twelve years of age I wrote for a manuscript magazine at the Redlands School the following hymn :

“ God is a spirit ; and he keeps
A strict watch o'er us still ;
Yea, not a single sparrow falls
Without his holy will.

“ God is a spirit ; and 'tis vain
To try to shun his sight.
His eyes can pierce the darkest gloom ;
He sees us in the night.

“ God the great spirit bids us live
Religiously below,
And choose on earth eternal bliss,
Or everlasting woe.”

This is, of course, doggrel ; but I quote it as showing a sensitive and over-anxious temperament. So also of other poems, long since happily committed to the flames.

One I remember described a fearful murder in an Alpine pass, and the last verse told the terrified reader that :

“A flash of lightning rent the sky,—
It split an oak tree standing by,—
And then was heard a piercing cry,—
The murderer was dead !”

So, too, the end of a miser was truly weird :

“And, while the miser trembling fears,
A clock, which had not struck for years,
Ticks with harsh grating on his ears,
And strikes the hour of one !”

The fiends then rush in upon him, and tear his flesh from his bones. On another occasion, after describing a restless night, I wrote :

“When the gates of Night on their hinges
Swing back to admit the light,
I praise my God for the morning
But I bless him for the night.”

Also I wrote several stories, mostly imitative of Dickens's sentimental style, and of Longfellow's *Hyperion*, and some of Scott. The curious thing was that I was the only member of the family whose tastes lay in this direction. Added to this I could very easily play any tune from ear on the piano, and I used to make wild attempts at oil painting. What strikes me about this early part of my life is that I wanted some “guide, philosopher, and friend” to help me to understand myself, and what I was doing. The only person in the family circle who seemed to me to sympathize with me in some degree was my mother's sister. My mother I feel sure spoilt me, and was anxious and careful and loving beyond measure. She was a woman of strong will and ample intelligence.

She could sing and play the piano with great taste and considerable execution. This, of course, delighted me. She has told me that when I was a small infant I used to insist upon her singing the whole of *Chevy Chase*, and if she tried to skip a verse I would prevent her doing so. But she was not poetical, or imaginative, or philosophical, or mystic. Her sister, Mrs. Webb, had taste and knowledge in literature, but she could see no beauty in Wordsworth or Tennyson, though she most kindly allowed me to try and convert her. She was a devout evangelical Christian, but had a keen sense of humour, and a most charming voice and manner. I am sure I must owe a great deal to her kindness and sympathy, which was in some degree supplied in later life by her daughter, Miss Lucinda Webb, whose steady affection and sympathy have lasted to the present date.

In consequence of my continued ill-health I was kept at home and had a tutor for some time, and I have no definite idea as to what I did. I must have had three or four different tutors. One I remember used to box my ears, but I don't know why. I fancy it was because of his own native stupidity. It was he or another who taught me to name all the towns in England with the rivers on which they stood from a blank map. Could anything be more wearisome? At last after, as I have before narrated, I went to Redlands, near Clifton, and then to the school at Highgate, I was sent to a sort of private tutor, the Rev. J. B. Reade, of Stone Vicarage, near Aylesbury. My three brothers had been there before me. I do not know if they learnt anything there; but when I was there we learnt absolutely

nothing. However, I spent a very happy three years in that lovely vale, fishing in the stream, shooting small birds with the vicar's gun, playing a little cricket, hockey, high jumping, bird's nesting, looking through the vicar's splendid telescopes at the moon and stars, etc., and in the end getting rid of all liver complaints, nervousness, and other vanities. I should add that Mr. Reade was well known in the scientific world, and was a man of great personal charm. He never even attempted to teach us anything, and I, being about fifteen years old, used to smoke with him in his private study or out on the lawn. A funny sight I should think !

It was here that I had the very great delight of looking at sun, moon and stars through two excellent telescopes. One large one revolved inside a large dome-shaped observatory, and there was a revolving set of stairs running on a sort of tram close to the wall. One night, in order to get a better view of the moon, I dragged the stair away from the wall; but after examining the moon I forgot to reinstate the stair, and went back into the Vicarage. Suddenly I heard a bang and a shout, and guessed what had happened ! I shall never forget that sensation ! Luckily the good vicar was not much hurt, but I was forbidden ever to go into the observatory again. As a matter of fact, I was soon forgiven, and my shocking carelessness was forgotten.

When I left Stone I went to King's College, London, daily for three years. Here I made many friends of my fellow-scholars—men of like tastes and sentiments, and all my superiors in knowledge and probably in ability. Chiefest of these was my dear old friend, Alfred Ainger, the late Master of the Temple and Canon of Bristol.

Here, too, Professor Brewer's Lectures on English Literature fired my mind, and gave me food to live upon. I was a bad attendant at all other lectures, but for him I would work day and night. Here I began to write verses, serious or comic, with some degree of success—or at least my fellow-students would "endure my lays." There was a comic magazine, to which I was a constant contributor, and there was a "Debating Society" and a "Shakespearian Society." These were something of novelties in those days.

I suppose some of the verses I wrote at this time interested my fellow-students, one of whom wrote :

"I think an ancient legend saith
That swans sing just before their death ;
If so, I wish our Horace might,
Like Whiskerandos, die all night."

I wrote a skit upon all the Professors—a parody upon *Hiawatha*, which had just then appeared and was, as it deserved to be, most popular, and especially lent itself to parody. I hope I was not ill-natured, and I endeavoured to qualify my parody by a preface in which I said :

"Deem not that with evil feelings,
Vicious as the caw of ravens,
Vicious as the talk of magpies,
Slandering the birds their neighbours,
Personal to all around them ;
No, but with the kindest feelings
Sing we of the whims and oddness
Of the persons herein pictured ;
And we laugh but as the squirrels—
Laughing, frisking in the pine trees,
Agidomo, king of squirrels,
Laughing in the gloomy pine trees :

All these jokes and harmless nonsense
Are not meant to be offensive,
Have indeed no sense of meaning,
But, mayhap, may pass the moments,
Dreary moments of our life-time,
As the sunshine through the branches,
Glancing, playing through the shadows,
Chequering the tedious pathway,
Where we wander, oft-times weary,
To the land of the Hereafter."

In 1857 Ainger and I went up to Trinity Hall, Cambridge. It is not possible I should suppose for any man to enjoy more absolute content and happiness than I did during my three and a half years at the University. I had a private mathematical coach, dear old Walton. He used to say: "I think, Smith, you are the most agreeable analyst I have ever known." I am afraid I did not work as much as I ought, but I did work at times, and Walton, who never placed a man too high, promised me a safe Senior Op. In my last College exam. I was bracketed with a man who was a high Senior Op. and was above one who was a wrangler. As it happened, about a fortnight before the examination I was skating on "The Backs," and performing some tricks in the dusk, when I tripped up, and, after a struggle, fell with a crash and dislocated my leg. The fat old butler carried me up into the College, and his noble nose bled profusely all over me, so that everybody thought at first that I must have been stabbed. Of course I was put to bed and strapped up. The question then arose as to "degrading" for a year, or taking an "*aegrotat*." I was dead against the latter, having known such a degree to be sometimes a fraud, and the head tutor, backed I believe by the Vice-

Chancellor, would not allow me to degrade. At last the authorities (influenced I believe by the exertions of Leslie Stephen) allowed me to be examined in bed, and an M.A. came to sit with me to see that I did not crib. These kind dons were all very much shocked at the cruelty of my parents, who they supposed were compelling me to this ordeal, but they did not know me or my parents who were begging me to take an "*aegrotat*." I got through the "three days" fairly well till the last day, when, after a terrible time in the morning, I broke down, and the doctor came, and had the blinds drawn down and no noise to be made. The examiners very kindly sent to tell me I had passed, but alas, I was low down in the Junior Ops. when the list came out. When I went up to take my degree in the Senate House there was another man on crutches from a similar accident. This was in 1860, and some wag called for "three cheers for the Crimean heroes," which was given. Of course I could not kneel before the Vice-Chancellor, but I had to hold out my hands for his blessing, and had not the good old man held me up I should have precipitated myself into his stomach.

Ainger and I used often to amuse ourselves and others at Trinity Hall by singing comic songs, sometimes in alternate verses. One specimen may suffice to show how very frivolous we could be. The great eclipse of the sun gave occasion to the following as far as I can remember it.

SELF: " I've turned the matter in my mind,
 And this is the result I find
 That sun and fog and cloud combined
 Make Hoop de oodem doo !

AINGER : " I've looked through glasses red and green
 And in the Court for hours I've been
 But all that there was to be seen
 Was Hoop de oodem doo ! "

SELF : " When eclipses happen in Australia,
 Why then your Greenwich won't avail yer
 But if this ain't an awful failure—
 Hoop de oodem doo ! "

AINGER : " To Peterborough some make trips ;
 But I don't think much of this eclipse ;
 But as Boadicea said to Colonel Phipps—
 Hoop de oodem doo ! "

I remember we young men used to complain, I believe not altogether without reason, of the food provided in Hall, and we started a club in College which we called the "Blow-out Club," to the great scandal of the Dons, and we used to have a grand supper once a week, and recite verses and sing songs about our woes. One of mine subsequently appeared in the pages of *Punch* :

A DISMAL ECHO SONG

In the Michaelmas Term, 1857.

Trinity Hall, Nov. 21.

" The gyps they sprawl about the Hall
 And galleries where freshmen huddle !

Propitious fates, protect the plates !—
 In such a wild and glorious muddle !

O, students, O,—the cause is past divining,
 But lately we have come to grief in point of dining—dining.

" O Lord, O dear, how thin and queer
 The pea-soup is,—and getting thinner !

The beef is raw and tries the jaw !
 The mutton's hard, as heart of sinner !

O, students, O,—it is no use repining,
 O students, do not mention—dining,—dining,—dining !

“ O friends, we dine like filthy swine !—
It tells on stomach and on liver !—
To mend the fare, our course is clear—
Let’s chuck the cook into the river !
O, Fuller, O, the Cam is sweetly shining,
And we will surely pitch you in in lieu of dining—dining.”

There was a prize given at Trinity Hall for English Essay for second and third year men, and on both occasions I carried off the prize; but what makes me really proud of the performance is that on both occasions Alfred Ainger was one of the competitors. From the time I first knew him at King’s College I always regarded him as a master of clear and graceful English. I believe there were three judges, but Leslie Stephen, I suspect, was the leader, and that is another flattering unction which I lay upon my soul. I was in common with most Trinity Hall men an ardent oar, and a good deal excited about all sports and pastimes. “Athletic Sports” were born in my time at Trinity Hall,¹ and from thence spread to Trinity, finally over the whole University, and to Oxford and to England at large. We used some of us to meet on Saturday evening in the large room belonging to Harry Hughes (the brother of Tom Hughes), where boxing, jumping, lifting weights, etc., etc., used to take place. Then we took to running races on Parker’s Piece, and lastly on Fenner’s Cricket Ground. There were no prizes, and no one to look on, but the fun of the thing was enough. During this period I devoured a great quantity of books, novels without end, and a good deal of poetry and general literature. Maurice and Kingsley

¹ As I believe, but some doubt has been thrown upon this by Professor Maitland in his *Life of Sir L. Stephen*.

were my guides on religious matters, and I used frequently to attend Lincoln's Inn Chapel and the church in Vere Street to hear Maurice preach. What a wonderful thing it was! And how few people cared to attend! The earnestness—the pathos—was what I never heard before or since. To hear him read the Lord's Prayer was not to hear reading, but to feel prayer. I also used frequently to go to the Parish Church in Mary-le-bone to hear Llewelyn Davis; and, at Cambridge, I often went on Sunday evening, in cap and gown, and stood in the aisle of the little church to hear Harvey Goodwin. My religious views were very much influenced by Tennyson's poetry. I should suppose that the new generation can hardly understand how deeply the religious doubts and difficulties of their fathers were affected by such a poem as *In Memoriam*. I remember that I was regarded by people, who were classed as "religious," as a heretic beyond the pale of salvation because I loved Tennyson's poetry. All my life I have been a great lover of books. Poetry has been my chief delight. My taste in poetry was catholic. I did not much care for Chaucer, however. After Shakespeare I have always put Spenser as first favourite, and Wordsworth and Tennyson bracketed second, and Coleridge next. Pope was a great friend of mine, and for me eclipsed Dryden. My daughter Dorothy says I am always quoting Pope, and she believes I know no other poetry; but this is an exaggeration. As for Milton, I love *Lycidas*, and *Comus* and *L'Allegro* also, and *Paradise Lost* and *Il Penseroso*, sometimes. Byron and Shelley I never cared for very much, and am now quite unable to read them, excepting one or two lyrics. Scott is always delightful in verse or prose, and in this

faith I have never wavered. Burns I loved when I was in love and young and foolish, and good reason why. I still can recognize the master-hand, but he does not grow upon one in old age. Besides these I knew a quantity of poetry of all sorts and descriptions, a great quantity by heart from constant reading of it, and my knowledge of comic verse is certainly very large. This knowledge of poetry has been a great resource for me during restless nights or long journeys. My wife says I read nothing but Burke's works, and Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, and there is some truth in this exaggerated account of my reading. I like well-written prose, but do not find it often in quite modern books. Macaulay and Froude have been my delight, and Hallam in a less degree. Goldsmith, Addison, Sterne, Lamb, Washington Irving keep ever fresh. I doubt if I could read Bulwer or G. P. R. James now, and certainly not Harrison Ainsworth. Shall I ever again read George Eliot? I read *Jane Eyre* a few weeks ago—powerful, and yet—and yet?—Well I think one wants a dose of Sir Walter after it. Bacon's *Essays* I know very fairly well. To *Gulliver's Travels* I am certain I owe a good deal for keeping me humble, and not unwilling to be guided by the Bible; but on the whole I do not much enjoy Swift. Milton and Hooker I have read in my youth, but I do not know that I should care to read them now for relaxation, as I can read Burke. I might go on gossiping about books for ever, and to no purpose; only I am sure that an account of myself which left out the reading of many books would be inadequate. Rogers the poet said: "Whenever I hear any talk about a new book I go off and read an old one."

Immediately upon my leaving college I published through Messrs. Macmillan & Co. a small volume of poems. They were noticed by two or three papers in a coldly favourable manner, and the *Standard* gave above a column to contrasting my verses with those of some miserable wight, saying (I remember) that mine, as compared with his, was as the air of Ben Lomond to the air in St. Paul's Churchyard ; but even this did not sell the book ! From this time until I gave up the Bar, and became a Metropolitan magistrate, I did not publish anything in the way of literature ; but worked for my living, and kept my verses slyly hidden away in a private drawer, from which it was my delight to take them out from time to time for polishing. I went to the chambers of an old conveyancer in Lincoln's Inn, named Bourdillon, for a year ; and then had the honour of drawing up a will of Jenny Lind, but I doubt if that will was ever executed. F. C. Burnand (afterwards editor of *Punch*) was one of those who read or did not read in Bourdillon's chambers. As soon as ever he appeared no one tried to work, and he kept us in fits of laughter till he went away. Then I worked in the chambers of Tom Jones of the Northern Circuit, where I saw plenty of business ; and on the Summer Circuit I went round with him to York, Durham, and Newcastle. He was a most jovial, friendly man, and had a large business as a junior. He was a licensed jester before their lordships in the law courts. One day in the absence of his leader he began to apologize, and to say that "he felt he would not be able, etc., " when Chief Baron Kelly said "I am sure, Mr. Jones, no one would say that you were not competent to deal with the

case." "Well, no one would say so except myself," said Mr. Jones. While following him round the circuit he took me to a comfortable family hotel by the seaside. The landlady came smiling to the door. "What would you like for dinner, sir?" "Bring me everything you have got in the house." Then, turning to me, he exclaimed, "Young man, that is the way to order dinner."

I was called to the Bar in April, 1862, at the Inner Temple and went the Midland Circuit, and Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire Sessions. I was for many years a Revising Barrister, and was made Recorder of Lincoln in 1881, a Bencher of the Inner Temple in 1886 (a distinguished honour, as I was only a "stuff gown"), and a Metropolitan magistrate in 1888. I had what may be called a small but pleasant business at the Bar. One year I made £1500. During the time I was waiting for work I wrote a great many big law books, which I think served to prevent my lapsing into utter despair, although from a lucrative point of view the pay for writing or editing is miserable. The labour of editing such huge books as *Addison on Torts*, or *Contracts*, *Russell on Crimes*, etc., is enormous. My old friend, Mr. Justice Lawrence, used to call me "The Index mongerer." I might mention that I was Secretary to the Royal Commission to inquire into Bribery at Oxford, where a "man in the moon" came down from the Carlton Club with £3000, sovereigns in little bags, and the whole iniquity was discovered by one Professor writing a letter to another Professor over the garden wall, and probably leaving the letter on his table where the maid read it, and handed it to her lover, who was

probably a Radical and sold it to the Liberal Party—at all events something of the sort had occurred; for the letter was produced before the Commission by the Liberal agent. Upon this enquiry was mainly based the excellent statute which practically put an end to all direct bribery.

I had the good fortune to be well received on the Midland Circuit, and became (if my modesty will allow me to say so) a very popular member thereof. I used to be invariably called upon on festive occasions to sing comic songs of my own making, and at one of our solemn farce courts I was unanimously elected “Poet Laureate.” I may also mention that upon an election of members to serve on the Bar Committee I was head of the whole poll of the Bar. A good deal of this success might be due to the tricks of canvassers, but it undoubtedly showed that I was possessed of a very large body of personal friends. I was very warmly helped in my profession by the members thereof, and by them only; chiefly by Fitzjames Stephen and L. W. Cave (afterwards Judges of the High Court) and by S. B. Bristowe (afterwards County Court Judge). With Cave I became very intimate, and in 1870 I married his wife’s sister. A more firm, loyal and helpful friend in every way than Cave never lived upon earth.

It is sad to think that the good old “Circuits” are becoming things of the past. They had a distinctly humanizing and friendly effect upon the members of the bar travelling round from town to town, and dining together for some weeks as one harmonious body.

CIRCUIT MESS.

Air—“Willow the King.”

I.

“Circuit Mess is a very fine thing,
Unto its praises a song I'll sing.
I know there are some folks, now, who say
That Circuit is going to vanish away;
But oh, if its life be only a span,
It's as well to be merry as long as we can!
So ho! So ho! We cannot do less
Than drink long life to the Circuit Mess.

II.

“What can we say of the food at Mess?
What words can the washy soups express?
Cod-fish, without any oyster sauce,
Beef, done to rags, and mutton that's coarse;
But, if of our puddings we may not boast,
There's that jolly red herring comes in upon toast,
So ho! So ho! We cannot do less
Than drink long life to the Circuit Mess.

III.

“What of the wine; though the victuals ain't good?
Plenty of lush washes down the food.
Our sherries and ports are only so-so;
And the claret seems colder the further you go.
But, bounding up to the ceiling above,
Goes the cork of the wine we all of us love.
So ho! So ho! We cannot do less
Than drink long life to the Circuit Mess.

Here followed verses *ad lib.* on the Q.C.'s at the head of the table, but they were too “topical” for insertion here; and the song ended with :

“ What of the juniors can I sing,—

You may have too much of a very good thing,
But, though we’re all starving, the truth to tell,
Yet we keep up our spirits uncommonly well.

So now let us sing e’er my song be done,—
We’re jolly companions every one.

So ho ! So ho ! We cannot do less
Than drink long life to the Circuit Mess.”

I never learnt oratory as an art. I belonged to a Debating Society at King’s College, London, and spoke once or twice a few words. I belonged to the Union Debating Society at Cambridge, and never spoke, and hardly ever heard a debate: I used the library of that society constantly. I joined the Westminster Debating Society when I left the University, and spoke twice. I was always a nervous speaker at the Bar. When I went into a new court, or had to deal with a new and unaccustomed case, I was sometimes so nervous as to suffer absolute discomfort in articulating. When I was in familiar surroundings this nervousness, I believe, added energy and humour to my speech. I was at times spontaneously eloquent or humorous. The Clerk of Assize one day told me he had just heard some people outside the court talking of a trial in which I was engaged for the defence. “ Well, how ‘as it gone?’ ” “ Oh, Bill’s been let off.” “ How came that about?” “ Well you see, he had such a favourite counsel.” On another occasion a man came up to me at Lincoln after hearing me defend a prisoner, and said he wished me to conduct a civil suit of importance on the Norfolk Circuit, as he had never heard any speaking like mine, etc. He was nothing daunted by my telling him that I should require a special fee of fifty guineas, but no doubt his solicitor

restrained his ardour. At Derby I often spoke with ease and success. I had to defend Sir Henry Wilmot's gamekeeper, who, in broad daylight, shot a poacher, as he was in the act of climbing a stile. He shot him in the calf of the leg. My only possible defence was "accident." But what a defence! Well, I struggled so manfully that the jury could not agree, and were discharged. At the next Assizes Sir Henry's solicitor said to me, "Sir Henry insists upon it that you must get him off. He is a most excellent gamekeeper!" "Yes," I said, "and a first-rate shot, no doubt, but that only shows that it was not by accident he shot the poacher." Next morning before going into Court I read in the county paper that a well-known sportsman in the county had been accidentally shot by one of his friends. Of course I had no difficulty in drawing tears from the eyes of the jury, and an acquittal from their softened hearts.

On another occasion I was defending some prisoners for a forcible entry. Some man had fancied that he was the fifth Earl of Somewhere. A quantity of public-house companions came with the fifth earl in carts to the old mansion, now in the lawful possession of some modern gentlefolk. As it happened the housekeeper and parlour-maid were cleaning the old family pictures, and had taken them down from the walls. The police had got wind of the matter, and after the prisoners had generally played the fool, and drunk some wine which they found in a sideboard, they were taken into custody. Of course, I explained to the jury that when the fifth earl arrived at his ancestral seat his ancestors came down from the walls to welcome him, etc., etc., and then it would ill-become

the noble earl, in the presence of his retainers, under all the circumstances, to refrain from offering them some old port, bottled in the reign of Richard II., when the “Forcible Entry Act” was passed, etc.; and then I read the section of the Act, which, of course, the jury could not understand in the least. And all this time the judge kept muttering, “Oh dear, what will he say next,” and the jury acquitted the prisoners. But the most curious thing of all was that the solicitors for the other side came up to London afterwards to request me to advise them upon the best mode of securing for their clients the peaceable possession of their property as against these impostors.

On another occasion at Nottingham, before Mr. Justice Hawkins, a half-cracked chemist was accused of setting fire to a rick. He had stuffed his lighted pocket-handkerchief into the rick. The rick was half destroyed, but a portion of the handkerchief with his name on it was still there. There was no defence; but I suggested in a hazy manner that there was no deliberate intention, and dwelt upon the absence of motive. I then went off upon the handkerchief, and told the story of Othello in most absurd fashion: “This handkerchief did an Egyptian give to my grandmother,” though I professed I could never understand how that could justify the Moor of Venice smothering Desdemona with the bolsters, etc., etc. I kept it up till judge and counsel were rolling about with laughter, and the judge gave a very light sentence on the jury’s recommendation to mercy. It used to be a chaff against me among my young friends that once at Lincoln I persuaded the jury to acquit an old woman who had clearly stolen some goods in the market by

alluding to the fact that it was the Saturday before Easter Sunday, and it would be very hard upon her that she should not go home and hear the “Easter joy bells” ringing in the morning. On another occasion of a charge of stealing an umbrella I told a story to the jury of how I once dined at the Reform Club, and missed my umbrella, which was returned the next day to the porter by a *Radical* member, who had run off with it, as it was a wet night. The prisoner, however, was, as they heard from the policeman, a member of a *Conservative* Association, so that it was clear he had not stolen the umbrella. This argument proved irresistible in Lincolnshire. Of course, I had graver cases to attend to—cases where facts had to be kept in order, or arguments stated with clearness and precision, and I suppose I was not wholly incompetent in this direction; but I have given the above illustrations to indicate that my chief merits were a sort of unstudied earnestness and a keen sense of the ridiculous.

Besides the singing of songs at the Mess, I would sometimes scribble a parody or comic verse, which would be passed round in court, and perhaps illustrated by the late Sir Frank Lockwood, and at last handed up to the judge, if he was (as most of their lordships were) fond of a joke. On one summer circuit there were three Revising Barristerships vacant, and the excitement was intense as to whom these appointments would be given. The two Judges of Assize were Mr. Justice (afterwards Lord) Field and Mr. Justice Denman. I retain the names, for I suppose none of my readers can fail to see that the jokes (such as they are) contain no atom of sense, and will see at once that I could only talk such

nonsense about persons whom I loved and honoured, and who, I believe, loved me. The verses illustrate the great degree of familiarity existing among the members of the Old Midland Circuit:

“ His lordship, Mr. Justice Field,
By all his gods he swore,
That the great trade in jobbery
Should be upheld no more ;
By all his gods he swore it,
In language plain and short,
And bade his trumpeters proclaim
East and south and north that same
By order of the Court.

• • • • •

“ Beyond all things a bobby
Loves to produce the swag ;
Next to himself the lawyer loves
The briefs that fill his bag ;
Sweet to the counsel is the fee
On which he shuts his fists,
Dear than life the junior
Loves the Revising Lists.

• • • • •

“ Sparks from the vale of Putney
Led up his ruffian lot ;
Well may the pallid labourer mark
The track of his destroying bark,
And tremble for his cot.
From London unto Notts they went,
And there they took the silver Trent ;
On slaughter and on rapine bent,
As well their looks betray’d ;
Nottingham, Newark, Lincoln, York,
Can tell the ravages they work,—
The frequent soda-water cork,
The wire of lemonade !

Three pounds of sugar in a tin,
 Three dozen lemons in their skin,
 Three bottles of the Old Tom gin
 Inflame his hellish crew,
 Three dozen bottles in the hold
 (Apollinaris as I'm told)
 They also take with ice so cold,
 And drink till all is blue.

.

“ Soden from green Tiburnia
 Down by the Notting Hill ;
 Lord of the stocks and serips and shares,
 Wonder of those, who, unawares,
 Try to outvie with stags and bears,
 And surely come to ill—
 Gibbons, whom no man yet could please ;
 And Forbes who's never at his ease,
 But always on the go ;
 Lumley, who, in the Common Pleas,
 Reports as all men know ;—
 So learned he, that, when he speaks,
 His longtailed words will last for weeks,
 So freely do they flow.

.

“ All these and more, whom I could name,
 Attempted to set up a claim
 To fill the vacant three ;
 But all were very far from game,
 And funky as could be.
 Was none who would be foremost
 To lead such dire attack,
 But those behind cried ‘forward !’
 And those before cried ‘back !’
 And backwards now and forwards
 Wavers that mighty sea,
 And for a space no man came forth
 To fill the vacant three.

But hark ! the cry is Carter,¹
And, lo, the ranks divide,
And the great Midland Counsel
Comes with his stately stride ;
Beneath his flowing mantle
A brief he doth conceal,
And on the back is marked the name
Of Marigold and Beale.
He smiled on Sparks and Soden,
A smile serene and high,
He eyed the flinching jobbers,
And scorn was in his eye ;
Quoth he, 'This pair of judges
Stand savagely at bay ;
But will ye dare to follow,
If Carter clears the way !'

.

" But meanwhile with the judges
Was council and debate ;
They read the applications
From early until late.
Some came from men they knew right well,
(Too well, alas, 'tis said)
And some from men they'd never seen,
Or thought they'd long been dead—
They read the letters written
At peril of their lives,
By fathers and by mothers,
By uncles, aunts, and wives ;
By noble lords, and ladies,
And M.P.'s not a few,
Who wrote, 'if you will do this job,
I'll do a job for you.'
They also were much got at
By many a sage Q.C.,

¹ The point made here is, nobody could be less like the proud, boastful Astur than my modest and able friend, John Currie Carter, J.P.

At length, all wearied with despair,
They beat their breasts, and tore their hair,
Then skied a copper in the air,
And filled the vacant Three."

My uncle, George Boden, Q.C., was a Bencher of the Inner Temple, and one day he was talking about the Readership, and said the Benchers wanted to have a curate who really knew how to read ; and I told him that, if they truly meant what they said, I could find them the best Reader in England. The result was that the Readership was thrown open to competition, and a huge number of curates sent in testimonials. One testimonial was presented by a chaplain of a gaol, who was described as "being accustomed to preach to hardened sinners." He was not selected by the Benchers. Among the six selected from the testimonials to read and preach in the Temple Church was my friend, Alfred Ainger, and there can be no doubt in anyone's mind that the Benchers were right in offering him the post upon his merits. He was at that time a complete stranger, but that he justified their unanimous approval has been shown during the many years he was Reader, and during his Mastership until his death. For nearly fifty years he was my most valued friend, and there was never the slightest approach to coldness between us, though circumstances sometimes prevented our meeting as often as we might wish. I have made many good friends in my time, but none so good as he.¹

I have before alluded to my taste for sketching. It has, I am sure, been a source of great comfort to me,

¹ Alas ! I have had many losses since I wrote this, July, 1905.

especially during holiday periods. I never had any lessons in the art; but I had the great advantage of knowing Thomas Creswick, R.A., and his almost equally gifted wife. Mrs. Creswick was a very intimate friend of my mother. She was a Miss Sylvester, a daughter of John Sylvester, senior, and sister of John Sylvester, junior, both of them distinguished engineers. When Thomas Creswick, then a raw young lad from Sheffield, married Miss Sylvester, my father and mother were their firm and fast friends, and my father very considerably assisted Creswick by buying some of his pictures, and getting his city friends to do the same. My mother's family (the Bodens and their friends) also gave Creswick many orders, and he very soon rose to be the most popular landscape painter of his time; and in my opinion one of the most truly delightful and eminently English landscape painters that has ever lived. When we were children, my sister Isabel and I would often be sent on some message from my mother to Linden Grove from Porchester Terrace; and when we rang the bell, would see Creswick's huge untidy figure, with hair unkempt, slouching velveteen coat, and large yellow slippers, emerging from behind the bushes in the garden, and shouting "What! Horatio the bold and the fair Imogen! Come along!" Then followed loud shouts to "Anne! Anne!" who came out crying "What is it Tom, dear!" and then my sister would go off to eat cakes and goodies with Mrs. Creswick, and I would be taken to look at the pictures—oh, day of delight! I wonder what I used to say on those occasions. I expect I said very little but, like the parrot, I thought the more. Afterwards, I used frequently to play with Creswick at billiards; and I have stayed with

him and Mrs. Creswick at Whitby, and at Barnard Castle, when he has been painting there. He seemed to be really pleased with my futile performances in painting. One of the most beautiful pictures he ever painted was described in the Royal Academy catalogue by a verse from one of my poems which he admired. I don't remember Creswick ever giving me any direct instruction in painting, but I learnt I suppose something from watching him at work. When quite a boy I gave up trying to paint in oil colours—they are most inconvenient in many ways for amateurs,—and Creswick almost never painted in water colours. One day he tried ; and a picture dealer was so delighted that he gave a high price for the picture and ordered another. Creswick swore (*more suo*) at having to do it ; and having put it under the pump showed it to me, saying, *that* was the true secret of water-colour drawing, which was beastly. He told me that Constable was the only artist who ever painted a tree really naturally, and said that Constable put endless dabs of white on the leaves of trees, and that it was quite true to nature, the light on the leaves making them white, while those in shade remained green. His ardent enthusiasm for the beauties of nature, and his delight in his art, were only to be equalled by his idleness and his easy good humour. In the *Life of Lord Tennyson*, Creswick is very happily described as “a capital broad genial fellow,” which he certainly was. His art is very characteristically described by Ruskin in *Modern Painters*. After protesting “I am very far from calling Creswick’s good tree painting” he proceeds to write an eloquent tirade upon the exquisite beauty of Creswick’s tree-painting, and the inferiority of everybody else’s. He speaks of him as “one of the very few artists who *do* draw

from nature."¹ At Creswick's house I used to see many artists, amongst whom I remember Mulready, Redgrave, Elmore, Frith, Egg, Cooke, Holman Hunt, Webster, Sir E. Landseer, and Ansdell, and no doubt some others whom I have forgotten.

In the course of my life as a barrister, I have made many friends, and amongst them many distinguished lawyers, but I do not know that any of them have had any direct influence upon my life or character. I ought to mention those who have assisted me in my career. The present Lord James of Hereford gave me my first appointment of Counsel to the Mint on the Midland Circuit, and also made me Secretary to the Royal Commission on Bribery at Oxford. Mr. Justice Mellor made me a Revising Barrister (because of my singing of comic songs, as it was said). Sir William Harcourt made me Recorder of Lincoln, a post which, although not lucrative, was pleasant and useful in many ways. The Earl of Halsbury, L.C., nominated me as Auditor of the Inner Temple, and this was a step towards my subsequent election as a Bencher of that Inn. This was a distinguished honour as I was only a "stuff gown," and the Benchers seldom depart from their rule of electing "silk gowns" only. I suppose I was very proud in consequence; but pride will have a fall. Two years after being elected a Bencher to represent the interest of the "stuff gowns," I was made a Metropolitan Magistrate; and on meeting a very charming brother Bencher, I told him of my appointment and added, "I am sorry to forsake the 'stuff gowns,' and afraid they will think that I have basely deserted them as I was elected to represent

¹ Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pp. 421, 422, 431.

them." "Never mind, my dear fellow," he exclaimed, "you did it d—d badly!"

I was made a Metropolitan Magistrate on the recommendation of the Home Secretary, Sir Henry Matthews, in 1888. It cannot be said that I owed my appointments to political favouritism. Indeed I was told that Sir Henry Matthews said, "Why should I appoint Mr. Horace Smith, he could get anything he wanted from the other side." However that might be, I got what I had always wanted, for I had (very soon after being called to the Bar) a strong desire to become a magistrate in London,—a position of the highest possible usefulness, and of the deepest interest. It is true that at times one feels as if

"the burthen of the mystery,
. . . the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world"

were too great to bear, and one longs that it may be "lightened."

I remember old Mr. Justice Byles saying to me that the happiest times of his life were those which he spent with his wife and children in the vacation by the seaside or in other holiday places. I cordially agree, notwithstanding I have felt at each particular time or place that there were some drawbacks. I was too poor and my family too large (amounting in time to four boys and four girls) to admit of our going away from home every year. I used to say we only could go every other year; but as a matter of fact we frequently went from home for a short time in the years when we were supposed to be economising. I used, when a bachelor, to go abroad in the summer vacation. I went three or four times to Switzerland,

twice to the Saltzkammergut, and once to the Pyrenees. Since then I have been with my wife to Switzerland, and other places abroad, and in the summer of 1899 I went with my eldest son, and two of the girls (Janet and Dorothy) and my wife to Pontresina and to the Italian Lakes. With the family I have been at Seaton, Sidmouth, Sullington (four times), Burwash, the Lakes (three times), North Wales (four times), Church Stretton and Minehead. Wherever I have been I have always insisted upon having room enough, and enjoying ourselves thoroughly without stint. If one can't afford to do the thing handsomely, it is better to abandon it altogether. To leave a comfortable house to be crowded into a narrow and uncomfortable lodging seems to me to be the height of folly. At Sullington Rectory we were most happy in a lovely country, simply roaming over the Downs all day, and of course sketching, picnicing, etc. In North Wales at Towyn we have had a very good time, a fine sea to bathe in, and lovely mountains to climb close at hand. One year some of us spent a pleasant time at Machynleth and Capel Curig, and also at Llangollen. Church Stretton is a very favourite place to me. It stands very high on the water-shed, the streams flowing one way to Ludlow, and the other to Shrewsbury. Perhaps the very jolliest of our holidays were spent at Glenridding, Ullswater, and Butcherlyp How, Grasmere, the beautiful house and grounds belonging to my dear brother Bencher, Mr. Etherington Smith. Wherever we went we generally contrived to have friends or relations visiting us. The goings there were times of great joy, and so were the comings home, though the latter would be mixed with regret. I don't think that for any of us the time ever felt

heavy or dull for a moment. The only weak point was the inevitable shortness of the allotted time, never extending beyond six weeks, and sometimes five or four only. We were never I think without a piano. Some had some lessons to learn or reading or writing on hand, and at least four of the party were sketchers. Sometimes tennis and cricket were obtainable, but I think mountain climbing, coupled with tea at a country inn or farm house were the chief amusements, varied at times with long drives. Bathing and occasional boating were to be had in the Lake Country, but scrambling about the hills is an endless and ever-increasing delight. The wild excitement of games at "stump cricket" can only be understood by those who joined in the fun. As one gets older one fails to keep up with the young folks in physical endeavour, but I do not on the whole find my enjoyment of life on such holidays any less than in former years. I have now my grand-children around me—quite as good and beautiful as my own children.

I have purposely omitted to say anything about my home life. The above sketch was meant to interest and amuse my family, and such intimate friends as may care to read it. It was not intended for publication, and I do not think that any correction or addition by me would improve it. If anything further is desired any one of my children would be quite capable of supplying it. My character and doings are, I believe, very simple and straightforward, whether for bad or good, and are probably much better known by any of my family than by myself. Of my poetry I should like to say a word or two. It is obvious that it makes no pretension to modern cleverness. It is simple and unaffected. It is

often open to the charge of imitativeness, if that be a fault; but it is often quite my own. Its prevailing note is cheerfulness—a kind of sunshine through the clouds, and it has music in it. The hymns and some of the psalms have the same qualities, and I believe them to possess feeling and poetic fervour kept within proper bounds by good sense and simple taste. How much or how little merit they possess it is not for me to judge, but I wish to indicate the general scope and tendency of them. My prose essays and stories and also my parodies and lighter verses, such as they are, require no observations of mine.

If one half of what my kind critics in the Press say may be taken as true, it would seem that I have sufficient grounds for believing that this Autobiographical Sketch may be thought interesting, although devoid of any striking incidents or any valuable remarks. I sincerely hope that I have not offended any person either by commission or omission, or given the slightest pain to any.

SELFISHNESS.

IF it be true, as Pope or Bolingbroke would have us believe,

“ That true self-love and social are the same,” this self-love must be a very different thing from selfishness. Selfishness is the exclusion of all consideration for others in order to make room for our own selves. In some degree, no doubt, while we are benefiting ourselves we may be doing good to others; but the really selfish man is not interested in this view, and thinks solely of himself. I think we can all agree that selfishness is a mean and miserable vice, but its various developments are not perhaps sufficiently recognized; and very often, though we can detect this vice in the character and conduct of our neighbour, we forget to notice it in ourselves,—the mote in our neighbour’s eye is easily detected. In a recent novel and play, by Mrs. De la Pasteur, called *Peter’s Mother*, the selfishness of the son and his unconsciousness of it are powerfully drawn, although the manifestations of it are often impossible.

The story told by Sir Walter Scott in *Redgauntlet* about the Pretender and his mistress is not, of course, historically correct, but it is powerfully told. The supreme and overpowering selfishness of the Prince is

marvellously exposed. His own debased dignity, and the smile or frown of his lady-love, were more to him than the welfare of his country or the extraordinary devotion of his followers. For a worthless passion he sacrifices a kingdom. In the *Burford Papers*, p. 119, by Mr. W. H. Hutton, the substance of the story is told as a matter of historic fact—Charles could not, and would not, give up Clementina Walkinshaw! Marie Antoinette and King Louis might have escaped to England had not the former delayed their flight by insisting on taking with her her precious jewels. Some people are selfish even on their death-bed :

“ ‘ I give and I devise (old Euclio said
And sigh’d) my lands and tenements to Ned.’
‘ Your money, Sir?’ ‘ My money, Sir! What, all?
Why, if I must (then wept), I give it Paul.’
‘ The manor, Sir?’ ‘ The manor, hold,’ he cried,
‘ Not that—I cannot part with that’—and died.”

There is no doubt that habits of selfishness will grow, and grow very fast, like all other bad habits, until a man becomes absolutely isolated and self-centred. He loses all interest in anything which does not seem to touch himself personally. In consequence of this habit he often misses what would be for his pleasure or profit ; and his views become more and more narrow, until at last he becomes unendurable, not only to others, but also to himself. The selfish man shuts himself up from all mankind, and like the limpet he glues himself tightly to the rock on the approach of anything which he thinks may interfere with his security, though it may turn out that the dreaded intruder is only a harmless passer-by, who has no desire to disturb him in the slightest degree.

The selfish man lives in a state of abject fear lest his repose should be invaded or his pleasures curtailed.

Lord Bacon says: "An ant is a wise creature for itself; but it is a shrewd thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. . . . It is a poor centre of a man's actions, *Himself*. It is right earth; for that only stands fast upon his own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another which they benefit. . . . It is the nature of extreme self lovers, as they will set a house on fire, and it were but to roast their eggs."

In our ordinary every-day actions are we invariably thinking of others rather than of ourselves? Which of us can conscientiously answer this question in the affirmative? Do we desire for breakfast, luncheon, and dinner those dishes and wines which we know are most appreciated by those who are to share the meat with us. Perhaps we may—*sometimes*. In settling ourselves comfortably in a railway carriage, do we always consider the other travellers before we close or open a window? Perhaps we may—*sometimes*. Surely we ought. Are we quite sure that in arranging for our holiday in Saltcombe-by-sea we are mainly considering the dear children's health, and not the propinquity of the golf-links? Let us hope that none of us would wilfully and spitefully do anything to irritate or incommodate our neighbour. To act from such motives is something worse than selfishness; but I doubt if it is as mean and contemptible as pure unadulterated selfishness.

You, my dear reader, know very well that the trees which yield you such delightful shade in your garden

darken the rooms in your neighbour's house. Do you propose to cut them down, or even to lop them? You know that your motor car smothers with dust the whole roadside, and that people are made sick by the noxious smells which it emits. What steps are you inclined to take to mitigate the nuisance? None at all! Sound the horn! Clear the road! "For this Englishman, he comes, he comes." You know that your dog barks half the night and keeps your invalid neighbour awake. Do you propose to send the dog into another county? No! for the dog is hardly as great a nuisance as the screaming parrot across the street; and it (that is the dog) keeps thieves away, so that after all you are a benefactor. I am afraid that the good old legal maxim, "*Sic utere tuo ut alienum non lèdas*," is very frequently disregarded.

You, my dear reader, are a gentleman of quiet and unostentatious habits. You find your best enjoyment in being "left alone," and you shrink more or less at what is called "pleasure." Your wife and daughter, however, take a different view of life, and in their harmless fashion like to indulge in a little vanity. Do you assist them in their endeavours, or do you offer a gloomy resistance? Or perhaps you are fond of field-sports—of hunting or shooting. Would you give up a day without grumbling in order to pay a visit to a bed-ridden friend? I know you would readily give a sovereign to a poor man in hospital, but would you go and sit with him for half-an-hour every other day? Oh, my dear fellow Christians, I am afraid we flatter ourselves too much in these matters, and do not allow our consciences a full opportunity of being heard. "I have heard Clive tell of two noble young Americans who came to Europe to study their art;

of whom one fell sick whilst the other supported his penniless comrade, and out of sixpence a day absolutely kept but a penny for himself, giving the rest to his sick companion. ‘I should have liked to have known that good Samaritan, sir,’ our colonel said, twirling his mustachios.”

There is Mr. John Smith, for instance, that eminent Member of Parliament, whose name appears in innumerable charity lists, and who takes the chair and makes orations on the, “Ameliorization of the Destitute both at Home and Abroad,” and is credited with an absolute overflow of kindness and benignity. Yet by his imperious temper at home his wife and daughters are rendered generally miserable, and have frequently to retire with tears in their eyes, while his servants tremble behind his chair. Or there is Mrs. Henry Jones, who is such a wonderful organizer of everything, from a picnic party to a woman’s mission. How splendidly she manages everything and everybody, and what a wonderfully good lady she is by most accounts of her which are prevalent. Yet it is strange that her maids seldom stay beyond the month, and that neither her son or daughter will live in the house longer than they can help. Then there is young Mr. and Mrs. Brown. They have only been married a couple of years, yet they squabble constantly, even before “company”; and it would be mere hypocrisy to pretend to hope that they are better friends when they are alone. Now, what is the meaning of these things? These are all *good* and even *goodly* people; but on the other hand they are scarcely Christians. They are supremely selfish. They do not allow the least thing to interfere with the constant gratification of their own pleasure, or pride, or comfort or wilfulness, or vanity or

desire for fame, riches, or honours. They may stand praying with the Pharisee in the parable, and enumerate as many virtues as he, but there is very little of the humility of the Publican about them. They distinctly fail to realize the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice.

It is, I think, noticeable that in these days too many of the clergy in their sermons and teaching pay very little attention to ordinary morals—to the ten commandments. In the Stuart times the clergy were enthusiastic upon ritual and church doctrine, and the nonconformists were equally enthusiastic on the other side. Both these enthusiasms had their day; but the eighteenth century clergy carefully avoided such matters, and coldly wrote about conduct and morals. They discussed the question,

“Which is the happier man or wiser,
The man of merit or the miser?”

Then arose Wesley and Evangelicanism, and there was a wave of enthusiasm for religion; and lastly came the revival of the “Oxford School,” where doctrine and ceremony were once more the evidences of a passionate enthusiasm. The only moral virtue which is now taught from many pulpits is a sort of wild desire to make everybody religious and to dabble in socialistic schemes, of which the parson knows nothing. I think it would be well if the clergy sometimes left these high matters, and gave assistance to the average man or woman desirous of conducting his or her actions according to the will of God in the most ordinary circumstances of life.

“The daily round, the common task
Will furnish all we need to ask—
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.”

But what is the “daily round” and “the common task”? They are supposed generally to mean our ostensible occupations, our way of making our living and performing our obvious and manifest avocations. For instance, if we are grocers we must not put sand in the sugar, however lucrative the operation may be; if we are doctors, we must not give quack medicines, if we are barristers we must do our best for our clients, and if solicitors we must not betray secrets, and if borough or county councillors we must not “job,” and so on and so on. But what I wish to hear more about is, how much care and attention ought we to give to the little but really important duties of detail in our lives as human beings, and in our relations with other human beings in the ordinary affairs of every-day existence? A man may be buried in Westminster Abbey with all his honours thick upon him, and every word on his tombstone may be true enough, yet if you knew him intimately you would be bound to admit that his every-day conduct left much to be desired. I am very far from wishing to pry into his conduct, as many persons are so willing to do, raking up the small defects of character to satisfy the curiosity of a gaping public. No, I would leave his greatness untarnished; but it is quite another thing, if we ourselves excuse ourselves for our many failings and faults on the ground that we have done some good deeds, and flatter ourselves by the soothing reflection that on the same day on which we stuck a knife into our enemy or our friend, we gave a cheque for a £100 to a hospital. If a man has £1000 in his current account at his bankers, and £100,000 well invested elsewhere, it is easy enough for him to

give £100 to a hospital ; but it is a very difficult thing for him to give even the smallest assistance to some poor fellow who has offended his dignity or interfered with his pride or pleasure. Archdeacon Burney was at a meeting when a list of subscriptions was being read : "Mr. —, Fifty Pounds." "That's pretty good," he whispered to his neighbour, Archdeacon Cheetham, who happened to know that the donor was excessively rich. Cheetham murmured, "It ought to have been £500," to which Burney rejoined, "Ah ! he forgot the *ought*!"

I have said that I wish that the parson would sometimes tell us, from the pulpit, about the duty of being unselfish ; but, on the other hand, I must own that I have frequently suffered from a peevish ill-temper, while I have listened to a parson telling his congregation that they ought to give a tenth part of their "goods" in charity. A tenth part of what ? Does the preacher mean a tenth-part of a man's actual income, or a tenth part of his surplus after satisfying all reasonable demands on his purse ? In the seat in front of me in church is a man with £1500 a year, all told. He has a wife and two daughters and three sons, one of the latter at Camford, and the other two at a public school. He is as poor as a rat ; and though he gives to this and that charity, yet he knows that he is robbing his wife and children in doing so. In the same seat are a man and his wife with no children, and their joint income amounts to the same sum as the income of the man with a family. Does the preacher really think that both these men ought to give neither more nor less than £150 a year in charity ? One man is in an official position,

and another can spend as much or as little as he pleases, being under no obligation to keep up appearances. Their incomes are precisely the same. Must each of them give a tenth, neither more nor less? A clergyman was reading the service before one of the royal dukes in the days of George III., and when he arrived at the text: "Zacchæus stood forth and said, 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor,'" the royal duke broke out, "Too much! too much! don't mind tithes, but can't stand *that*." Again I ask the question, when you order me to give a *tenth*, what do you mean,—a tenth of what? After a man has provided the necessaries of life according to his lawful requirements, surely he ought to save up for his old age, or for his wife and family. It would be a positive scandal and wickedness if he did not do so; and then the question arises as to *how much* he ought to put by. At this rate, dear reader, you will find very little left for the "tenth" to operate upon. The real and true rule is for each man honestly to consider within his conscience whether he might not so regulate his expenses by the suppression of useless follies and fancies that he may have a margin to devote to the welfare of his poorer neighbours.

Children, it is to be hoped, may be taught to be unselfish, and gradually to form habits of unselfishness. Parents in these days, whether rich or poor, are too much given to spoiling their children. They indulge them in idleness and in luxury, and then they are surprised that when the children are grown up they will not be controlled, and are unable to control themselves. The present writer has had a long experience of the ways of the poor in dealing with their children. One

prolific source of experience arises during the hearing of "Educational Cases," or, as they used to be called, "School Board Cases." The *babies* of poor parents are never taught obedience, and therefore the *children* turn out to be "truant," or worse. A child of *five years of age* had not regularly attended school. "Why doesn't your child go to school?" I asked. "Please your worship he keeps such bad company." "Really, ma'am," I said, "*you* are the only company he ought to keep." Another child of ten years of age had not been at school for two months. "Why is that?" I asked. "He's had the stomach ache, your worship." "Good heavens, ma'am," I cried, "if he has had the stomach ache for two months he should have been dead and buried long ago!" This showed a sad irritability on my part, but I had already dealt with twenty or thirty equally foolish excuses. There is much neglect of children amongst the poor, and the S.P.C.C. has done a great deal to diminish it by warning parents, or, if necessary, by prosecuting them. On the other hand, too much attention is paid to the children by many parents in the well-to-do classes. In former days the children were kept in the background; now they are often too much *en evidence*. The happy mean is not, perhaps, easy to hit. Cruelty or wilful neglect is punishable by law, and a terrible crime it is; but unlimited spoiling may have worse effect in the end. A lady was asked whether she liked peaches, and she said she could not tell, because she had never tasted one. Being asked to explain, she said: "You see when I was young we were told that peaches were only for the grown-ups, and when I had grown up I found that they were reserved for the children."

The rich have many temptations towards selfish indulgence. The possession of wealth places everything which can gratify their tastes or appetites at their immediate disposal.

“They may talk as they please about what they call self,
And how one ought never to think of one’s self,
How pleasures of thought surpass eating and drinking,—
My pleasure of thought is the pleasure of thinking
How pleasant it is to have money, heigh-ho !
How pleasant it is to have money.”

Not that money is a pleasure, but it commands so much.

Gentlemen’s clubs (and I suppose ladies’ clubs are not behindhand in this respect) are a sort of hot-bed of selfishness. It is not merely that at the club a member can get anything he wishes to eat or drink ; but the whole of the appointments tend towards selfishness. Every comfort and luxury is heaped up in profusion. It is true that some men restrain their appetites, and live abstemiously even at their clubs ; but it is the absolute comfort and freedom from any anxiety or regard for others which makes a club so delightful and so selfish. The head of the family even when at home is in most cases taught selfishness. His wife, his children, and his servants wait upon his wishes and his whims. The effect of this upon the whole of his character is perhaps modified by the fact that, when he is away from home about his business or pleasure, he finds that mankind in general take him at their valuation, and not at his, and treat him accordingly.

The poor are often very selfish in their limited opportunities of being so. Brothers and sisters will grow up

together on tolerably friendly terms ; but, when they find that they have to "fend for themselves," they become callous about the fate of each other, and of their parents. In a pamphlet issued by the S.P.C.C. it is fairly pointed out that "the reason for this selfishness . . . lies, no doubt, in the instinct of self-preservation. People who live near the line which separates them from actual want are led by this instinct to cut themselves off from those whose claims upon them might drag them over the line." It is often a real struggle for existence, and the love of life is stronger than the affection of friendship or family ties. As is said in the *Bab Ballads* by the shipwrecked midshipmite:

"I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And that cook he worshipped me ;
But we'd both be blow'd if we'd either be stow'd
In t'other one's hold, d'y see."

Self-preservation is undoubtedly a strong and universal instinct ; and the law recognizes it as such, and will reduce the implication of murder arising from death caused by violence to the lesser crime of manslaughter. It is somewhat of a Jesuitical inquiry as to whether there may not be cases where, apart from any lawful resistance of violence, the crime of murder may not be morally condoned. There is an old story, retold in verse by Robert Browning, of a mother with several children in a sledge being pursued by wolves, and one by one she throws out the children, and escapes herself into the town. She was torn to pieces by the townsfolk, and this was supposed to be a righteous judgment upon her. It seems to me that up to the last baby her conduct would be justifiable,

and the question of *self*-preservation would hardly enter her mind ; but with the last baby it must have become paramount. By the hypothesis nothing could be gained by throwing herself to the wolves, both she and the last baby would be gobbled up ; and if she survived she might be useful still in her generation. A merciful Providence does not practically as a matter of fact place such problems before us for solution.

Cases of shipwreck or of fire on land or sea afford instances of the problem of self-preservation at the cost of others ; and although it may be easy to preach magnanimity, it might be difficult to practice it ; and I think one's judgment ought to be tempered by some sympathy where magnanimity has not prevailed. But it is more useful to point out how frequently selfishness displays itself in a most revolting manner when only some slight advantage over one's neighbour is to be gained. When a London crowd has collected to see the King and Queen pass by, what pushing and shoving, and taking of unfair advantage are seen ! To get a good place at a concert, football or cricket match, I am afraid many men and women struggle unfairly to the front. At that quiet, select, and orderly place, Chislehurst, where the Emperor Napoleon III. was lying in state in the Roman Catholic chapel, numbers of fashionably dressed ladies had their garments torn from their backs in their eagerness to see the show.

Some persons succeed in gaining a reputation for unselfishness which they little deserve. They make themselves agreeable and pleasant to their neighbours, and are lavish in their promises. It would "give them so much pleasure if you would come and see them,

and stay for a week. Oh no, no trouble at all, quite delighted if you will come"; but they carefully avoid fixing a date, or even telling where they live, or how you are to get to their abode. They remind one of the old story of the boy who was asked to give an account of the parable of the good Samaritan. He concluded his essay by saying that "the Samaritan gave the innkeeper twopence, and said, that if he spent any more he would repay him when he came again. This he said well knowing that he would see his face no more."

There are also some persons who fancy themselves to be entirely unselfish, and the world in general admits them to be so. But perhaps in some of them selfishness may be ruling their conduct. In the case of persons obviously denying themselves the ordinary pleasures of life, and devoting themselves to good works or to meditation, there may be a mixture of pride, or love of admiration, or a positive distaste for the affairs and pleasures and duties of ordinary life, which has induced them to separate themselves from "the world." No doubt this selfishness of good people is not like the selfishness of the wicked, but there it is. Henry V. says :

" But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive."

There are some persons who will endure any amount of hardship and suffering in the performance of some purely voluntary or self-imposed task, yet they will absolutely decline to do the thing they ought to do, and which lies immediately in their path. They are selfish, though one-half the motive of their action may be philanthropic.

“A Christian,” says Bishop Wilson, in his *Maxims*, “is under a *continual* necessity of denying himself.” Perhaps this is a hard saying; but at all events one may say that the necessity is sure to arise pretty frequently; for as the Bishop notices in another page, “to learn to bear with the pride of one, the stupidity of another, the rudeness, the neglect of a third; . . . to submit to disappointment, loss of goods and friends, to bear with the humours, follies, tricks of those with whom we have to do—these are instances of great self-denial,” and perhaps we may trace a little asperity in the remarks of the Bishop.

It is mostly in little things—in trifles, that our selfishness is most frequently indulged; and it is in these trifles that we often irritate or alienate our best friends. It is also in little things—in trifles, that we endear ourselves to our friends, who, perhaps, when we are absent or even dead, will ponder with affection

“On that best portion of a good man’s life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness, and of love.”

Lord Bacon says: “If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them. If he be compassionate towards the afflictions of others it shows that his heart is like the noble tree that is wounded itself when it gives the balm. If he easily pardons and remits offences, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries, so that he cannot be shot. If he be thankful for small benefits it shows that he weighs men’s minds, and not their trash. But above all, if he

have St. Paul's perfection, that he would wish to be an Anathema from Christ, for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself."

If the account given by Mr. Fielding Hall of the doctrine of Buddha, in his *The Soul of the People*, be adequate and correct, as I have no doubt it is, then Buddhism is unmitigated selfishness. It is the direct opposite to the Christian ideal, which is self-sacrifice. The true Christian, however much as a human being he may wish for rest (for the Peace of God which passeth all understanding) has yet a higher ideal than the mere "Great Peace" of the Buddhist. He looks forward to an endless life of strenuous exertion, and victory by the blessing of God throughout eternity.

"Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aimed not at glory, no lover of glory she :
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

.

She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky :
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die."

Though a man should be surrounded by every comfort or luxury he can desire, though he may be loaded with titles, and smothered in wealth, he may still be unhappy in himself, if he is selfish—if he has no real love for his friends or his country :

"The wretch, conceiter'd all in self,
Living shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly-dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung."

A FARRAGO OF VERSES.

HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

O THOU, whom neither time nor space
Can limit, hold, or bind,
Look down from Heaven, Thy dwelling place,
In pity on mankind !

Another year has just begun :—
Thy loving care renew.
Forgive the ill that we have done,
The good we failed to do.

In doubt or danger all our days
Be nigh to guard us still.
Let all our thoughts and all our ways
Be governed by Thy will.

Oh, help us now and here to live
From selfish passions free ;
And at the last vouchsafe to give
Immortal life with Thee.

HYMN FOR SUNDAY.

LORD of the Sabbath, unto Thee
 We come for rest and peace—
 Oh, bid our worldly fancies flee,
 Our week-day troubles cease !

Each moment hopes and fears are born ;—
 Our thoughts still start astray :
 We idly pluck the ears of corn,
 That grow beside the way.

Lord give us evermore Thy bread,
 In answer to our prayer ;
 And where Thy table, Lord, is spread,
 Be ever with us there.

So shall our earthly troubles flee,
 And all our murmuring cease ;
 So shall our souls be stayed on Thee,
 And rest in perfect peace.

OLD ENGLAND.

BY THE KIND PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."

OUR armies march, and scour the plain :
 Our navies guard our shores ;
 Our cities strain with might and main
 To fill the world with stores ;
 Brave workers toil both night and day,
 With matchless strength and skill ;—
 Where are the "signs of slow decay" ?—
 England is England still.

Through many a shire by tow'r and spire
 Each village makes its nest,—
 Hard sons of toil with hearts of fire—
 Our bravest and our best ;
 They tend the kine, they fold the sheep,
 The fields they sow or till,
 Their “noiseless tenour” yet they keep,—
 England is England still.

Oh friends far off,—far, far away
 From this our Island Home,
 What shall we pray,—what can we say
 To you across the foam ?
 Whate'er betide may fear or pride
 Ne'er touch our right good will ;
 May you and we long live to see
 England, old England still.

Though factions fight with all their might,
 And mar each wise endeavour,
 The cause of Freedom and of Right
 Still rolls along for ever.
 This happy land secure shall stand
 Based on her People's will ;
 Though wide the range, through every change,
 England is England still.

O rolling down more lovely made
 By every passing cloud,
 O purple heath, and dappled glade,
 O wood by breezes bow'd,

O land and sea, O lake and lea,
O meadow, stream, and hill,
O rock-bound coast ! where'er we be,
England is England still.

Dear Mother Isle, how fair the smile
That lightens up thy face ;
E'en those who part from thee awhile
Long for thy warm embrace.
Through hours of joy—through hours of pain
My heart with thee I fill ;
Through shine or rain thou wilt remain
England, my England still.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING.

BY THE KIND PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."

As I look from my window at dawning of day,
On his cocoanut up in the tree
A little tomtit goes swinging away,
As happy as happy can be.

The blackbirds and thrushes steal out of the bushes,
As gloomy and starved as can be ;
But that little tomtit he cares not a bit,
On his cocoanut up in the tree.

For he swings with the breeze on a twig in the trees,
And he pecks at his nut half the day ;
And no other bird that ever I heard
Could perch on that bendable spray.

But see how he scatters his food all around,
 In a shower of little white bits !
 And the birds on the ground have all of them found
 A blessing in little tom-tits.

So Christmas is coming, and with it good cheer
 To all whom Dame Fortune has blest ;
 And eating and drinking might set us all thinking
 Of what we can do for the rest.

THE TOM-TIT'S REPLY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—May I venture to offer the enclosed verses as a reply to Mr. Horace Smith's in the *Spectator* of December 18th, 1909?—I am, Sir, etc., C. J. BODEN.

North Wingfield Rectory, Chesterfield.

As I look from my cocoanut up in the tree,
 High up on a "bendable spray,"
 Through your dressing-room window your face I can see,
 Though I can't even guess what you say.

Your figures of speech are quite out of the reach
 Of the brain of a little tom-tit,
 Just as when in the spring I'm beginning to sing
 You won't understand me a bit.

But we easily tell that you're meaning us well,
 For actions speak louder than words,
 And we little tom-tits, when the weather permits,
 Will give thanks on behalf of the birds.

May you have all good cheer through the coming new year,
And your love for the birds grow still greater.
How I wish I might speak to my dear brother Beak
Through the means of a friendly *Spectator*!

TOM TIT.

THE TOAD'S PROTEST.

“I'LL larn ye be a toad,” he cried, and struck
My grandsire with a four-pronged fork—a blow
Would fell an ox! He died aged ninety-three,
But might have lived at least a score more years,
Ugly but useful. Oh, you men, you men,
Why will you worship beauty? There's that frog,
That skips and hops like any idiot:
Because it has a silken skin bedecked
With yellow spots, you show it to your child,
And talk of froggy going wooing—fudge!
But when you see an honest toad you cry
Beware, my child, it's venomous, it spits—
All lies! But virtue is its own reward.
I'll crawl along, and eat a hundred flies,
And then curl up my legs, and have a sleep.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD ALVERSTON, L.C.J.

You ask more verses; but, alas, one knows
Too many poets scribble now-a-days;
And no man listens to their blame or praise.
There's something I could wish to say in prose,

But dare not. Who would seek to flatter those
 Who scorn all flattery, being sternly bent
 Step after step to climb the steep ascent—
 The rugged pathway to the eternal snows?

Stalwart in mind and body—doubly strong;
 Insatiate of work, which must be done
 To help the Right in battle with the Wrong!
 Great sorrows have been yours, great triumphs won
 With fortitude. Oh, may the day be long
 Ere shadows deepen with the setting sun!

JUST AS YOU LIKE IT.

(Being a close adaptation of "As You Like It," Act II., Scene 5, including the famous invocation, "Ducdame, ducdame, ducdame.")

BY THE KIND AND SPECIAL PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF
 "PUNCH," MESSRS. BRADBURY, AGNEW AND CO.

Mr. Asquith sings:

UNDER St. Stephen's fane,
 Who would with me remain,
 Tuning his merry note
 Unto old COBDEN'S throat,
 Come hither, come hither, come hither :
 Here shall he see
 No enemy,
 But Free Trade and fair weather.

Mr. Balfour sings:

Who doth all dumping shun
 And loves to live i' the sun,

Growing the food he eats,
 Content with what he gets,
 Come hither, come hither, come hither :
 Here shall he see
 No enemy,
 But Tariff and fine weather.

Mr. Lloyd George sings :

Since it has come to pass
 That every idle ass
 Loves his own wealth and ease,
 Grown rich by slow degrees,
 (Dukes dam'em, dukes dam'em, dukes dam'em) :
 He, even he,
 Well tax'd shall be
 An if he will come to me.

Mr. Asquith.—What's that "Dukes dam'em"?

Mr. Lloyd George.—'Tis an East End invocation for calling fools within my circle. I'll get my Bill passed if I can ; if I cannot, I'll rail against all the well-born in England.

Mr. Asquith.—And I'll go worry the Lords ; their ruin is prepared. [*Exeunt.*]

ENGLISH AS SHE IS SPOKE.

" AVIATION " is vexation,
 " Dirigibles " as bad,
 The " monoplane " is quite insane,
 And " aero " drives me mad.

THE DUCK AND HER BROOD.

BY THE KIND PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR OF THE
“WESTMINSTER GAZETTE.”

A WONDERFUL brood, to be sure, I've got,
Pretty enough, but a rather mixed lot.
Can I keep them together, I wonder, or not?

Quack-quack ! Quack-quack !
Come back, come back !

Hey-dear, hey-dear, you're a wandering pack !

Some take to the water and some to the wood,
And others fly into the trees for food—
You ought to attend to your mother—you should !

Quack-quack ! Quack-quack !
Come back, come back !

They'll none of them listen—alack ! alack !

They've all kinds of notions and all sorts of ways,
And *one* half can't tell what 't'other half says ;
But whatever else happens it's *me* that pays !

Quack-quack ! Quack-quack !
But, alack ! alack !

I hope they won't wander away from the track.

They've been taken up now by Protectionist quacks,
Who'd shift the burden on other folks' backs ;
They'll squabble like mad over tariff and tax ;
Quack-quack ! Quack-quack !
But, if foes attack,
We'll all stand together—every man-jack !

A STREET ROW.

(A *True Story.*)

SHE stole in furtive silence through the crowd
That thronged the street. Ever she turned and shot
A fearful backward glance, as though aware
Of danger drawing nearer, in full flight
Still breathing slaughter. Ere she reached the curb,
Lo ! on a sudden from a butcher's shop
Out sprang, ferocious, a huge mongrel dog,
Fed on raw scraps of soul-destroying meat.
He, rolling over with tumultuous bark
His natural enemy, turned round again
To face a collie from a coster's stall,
Ready for fight. Fiercely they met and fought.
Which, when the butcher saw, he rushed to save
His mongrel ; and with heavy boot he kicked
The noble collie, roaring loud in pain.
At which the coster shouted “What d'ye mean
By kicking of my dog. If *you* want fight
Fight *me*, I'm ready.” And at once they met
A Douglas and a Percy, in affray.
The Douglas hit the Percy on the nose,
And he retaliated with a punch
Full in the stomach ; when behold there rose
The awful form, gaunt, imperturbable,
Of Mercury, who bore them both away
To Bow Street, where sat Jupiter in state,
Omniscient, but scarce knowing what to do.

LAYS OF LITERARY LUNATICS.

I.

ODE TO A BEETLE FOUND DROWNING IN A
TREACLE JAR.

LITTLE beetle !
In the treacle,
 Can I kill thee? No!
Men might do so, well I wot,
For falling in this treacle pot,
 But I will not do so!

Little creature !
I'll not treat your
 Case in such a way ;
Rescued by this silver spoon,
You'll be crawling very soon—
 Where?—I cannot say !

Little crawler !
Though much smaller
 Thou mayst be than man ;
From thy tumbling in the jar
Man may learn what's better far
 Than from books he can !

Little teacher !
Let the preacher
 Find a sermon here ;—
Tell it to the scoffing world
Ere to Hades they are hurled
 Ne'er to reappear !!

Awful sinner !
Sunk within a
Slough, you writhe about ;—
Lo ! you struggle in despair,
Like the little beetle there,—
And no one pulls you out !!

II.

THE MEETING.

I HAVE qualms about thee, queerest
Doubts which make me doubly sad ;
Never will I leave thee, dearest,
Never, though I own I'm mad.

We were standing where the 'buses'
Roar beside the Marble Arch ;
And the dampness of the evening
Took away my collar's starch.

Oh, the dreary deluge falling
On the night when first we met,
Lip to lip, with an umbrella
O'er us to keep off the wet ;

While a thousand lamps were shining
From their iron posts above ;
And the nursery maids were telling
All the Life Guards of their love.

III.

THE LOVE-LORN.

THE beady belted bumble bee.

The blur that blots the blue,
Remind me of a lily lass,
So trustful and so true.

I loved a little lily lass,
Within a garden gay ;
A most disloyal lordling stole
My lily lass away !

Ah me ! the primroses so pale
Rise in a radiant row !—
He stole my lily lass away,
Where greeny grasses grow.

The lambent light has left the lea,
The swirling swallows swim ;
Where margent marigolds bedeck
The brackish watery brim.

The green impurpled fields of sky
To pearly paleness pass—
But I am into Bedlam gone,
And so's the lily lass.

IV.

THE MYSTERY

WE watched in the gloaming together:
The moon rose over the hill:
There was blood on the purple heather,
And a cry that was weird and shrill.

Oh pine wood mirky and dreary!
Oh moonshine wanish and pale!
My dim faint heart is a-weary;—
But how can I tell the tale?

“We must not be parted for ever!”—
But I knew not the words I said—
A splash on the foaming river,
And the living was dead—stark dead!

This story is one of the queerest,
I am ready at once to admit,
And I cannot disclose if my dearest
Was an he, or a she, or an it.

LIMERICKS.

A GENTLEMAN living at Brixton
The 9.27 had fix'd on,
He arrived just too late
But consented to wait
And went up to town by the nixt 'un.

THERE was an old party of Meintz,
 Who used to drink beer out of pints ;
 He then took to quarts,
 And became out of sorts
 With rheumatics in most of his jints.

AN EMBARRASSED SUPPORTER OF
 FEMALE SUFFRAGE.

Air—“The Gentle Maiden.”

I.

I DREAMED she was mild as an angel,
 And sweet as the flowers of May ;
 She seemed like a “gentle maiden,”
 With never a word to say.
 Her eyes had the glance of moonshine,
 And I hoped she knew how to behave ;—
 Far more than the shifty Lodger’s,
 Her vote and support I’d crave.

II.

But I’m forced to abandon my darling.
 I hear of her everywhere !
 The sound of her voice is tremendous :
 Her eloquence rends the air.
 She screeches out, “Votes for Women !”
 Vociferates, “That’s a lie !”—
 The shrieks of that frantic spinster
 Will follow me till I die !

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

COLLECTED POEMS, 1908.

Some Press Opinions.

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